

# TORONTO METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY POLICY OF SENATE

## GRADE REASSESSMENT AND GRADE RECALCULATION

**Policy Number:** 162

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**Responsible Committee or Office:** Provost and Vice President Academic

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### 1. PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to affirm the right of students to request a reassessment of a graded course component if they believe their grade does not reflect the academic merit of their work or request a recalculation of a final grade or a grade on a course component if they believe an error or omission has been made in the calculation of grades.

The further purpose of this policy is to enable students' requests for grade reassessment and grade recalculation to be processed and assessed in a fair, timely, objective, and consistent manner throughout the University.

### 2. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all full-time and part-time undergraduate, graduate, law and Chang School of Continuing Education students who are enrolled in a course at Toronto Metropolitan University (the "University").

### 3. DEFINITIONS

#### 3.1 Chair/Director

This is the head of the Department or School. In this policy, Chair/Director includes Graduate Program Director and Associate Chair of Graduate Programs.

#### 3.2 Graded Course Component

An essay, assignment, laboratory report, examination, test or other completed course work which has received a numeric, letter, or pass/fail grade.

#### 3.3 Grade Reassessment

A review and reevaluation of a graded course component when a student contests the grade based on the merit of their work.

### **3.4 Grade Recalculation**

A review of the calculation of a final grade or a grade on a course component to eliminate arithmetic errors (e.g. improper addition) and/or omissions.

### **3.5 Graduate Assistant (“GA”)**

A graduate student employed by the University to assist with teaching or related duties.

### **3.6 Instructor**

For this policy, instructor is the person responsible for the course and includes all those represented by the Toronto Metropolitan Faculty Association as well as part-time, sessional, and Continuing Education contract lecturers who are represented by Unit 1 or Unit 2 of CUPE Local 3904.

### **3.7 Teaching Assistant (“TA”)**

An undergraduate student employed by the University to assist with teaching or related duties.

## **4. PRINCIPLES**

- 4.1 The values stipulated in the University’s Senate Policy Framework are applicable and fundamental to this policy.
- 4.2 The University is committed to promoting academic success and to ensuring that students’ grades accurately reflect their attainment of the intended learning outcomes of a course.
- 4.3 All members of the University community (faculty, students, and staff) are expected to act in good faith. “Good faith” is a general presumption that all parties involved are acting with honest and sincere intentions.
- 4.4 The University expects instructors to:
  - 4.4.1 ensure timely and constructive feedback in response to student work, in accordance with Policy 166: Course Management
  - 4.4.2 recognize the need to reconsider evaluations of student work in some circumstances;
  - 4.4.3 process requests for grade reassessment and grade recalculation fairly, objectively, respectfully, transparently, and expeditiously.

4.5 The University expects students to:

- 4.5.1 review written feedback on graded course components and seek additional feedback, where necessary, to understand evaluation procedures and decisions on course components;
- 4.5.2 be respectful of instructors' subject matter expertise.

## 5. GENERAL REGULATIONS

- 5.1 Students' requests for a grade reassessment must be based on sufficient academic grounds and be supported by evidence and documentation (e.g. from the course outline, course notes, textbooks, assignment grade rubric). Merely asserting that the work deserves a higher grade, that the student disagrees with the grade or that the assignment was the result of a great deal of effort, is insufficient support for a grade reassessment. At each stage of reassessment, the student must explicitly respond to the comments made in the previous assessment or reassessment in support of their argument that the grade does not reflect the academic merit of their work.
- 5.2 For grade reassessments in graduate courses, reassessment of a portion of a graded course component is not permitted.
- 5.3 A reassessment or recalculation may result in the grade being maintained, raised or lowered.
- 5.4 Students have the right to see their graded course work. Students will be given supervised access to any graded work that has not been returned or to their final exams, and be permitted to use that work for a reasonable length of time to prepare the required explanation for the grade reassessment or grade recalculation request.
- 5.5 All parties will abide by the timelines outlined in the Procedures: Grade Reassessment and Grade Recalculation. However, when warranted by special circumstances, decision-makers may waive or extend a deadline.
- 5.6 Students must be provided with the written rationale and explanation for grade reassessment and/or grade recalculation decisions made by GAs/TAs (where applicable), instructors, Chairs/Directors, and independent assessors.
- 5.7 If reassessment or recalculation of the course component was not done in compliance with this policy and its procedures, an appeal may be submitted on the grounds of procedural error. Please refer to Policy 168: Grade and Standing Appeals.
- 5.8 If reassessment or recalculation of the course component was done, and there are no grounds for procedural error, students cannot subsequently appeal the grade on the course component on Course Management grounds.
- 5.9 The use of this policy to gain academic advantage or benefit, such as by resubmitting altered test or examination work after it has already been evaluated, constitutes academic misconduct and will be subject to the

processes, penalties, and consequences, as outlined in Policy 60: Academic Integrity.

**RELATED PROCEDURES:**

**Procedures: Grade Reassessment and Grade Recalculation**

**RELATED POLICIES**

**Policy 60: Academic Integrity**

**Policy 168: Grade and Standing Appeals**

## **PROCEDURES:**

### **GRADE REASSESSMENT AND GRADE RECALCULATION**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF PROCEDURES**

The Grade Reassessment and Grade Recalculation Procedures (the "Procedures") outline the procedures to be followed when students request a grade reassessment or grade recalculation.

#### **2. GRADE REASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

Students who believe that a grade in a course component, either in whole or part, does not reflect the academic merit of their work should generally first review their concerns with the instructor to resolve the issue. However, the instructor may specify that students review their concerns with the GA/TA prior to requesting a reassessment by the instructor. In such cases, instructors must inform students of this process in writing.

Reassessment, therefore, may be a multi-stage process commencing with an informal review by the GA/TA, proceeding to a request for reassessment to the instructor, and, thereafter, to the Chair/Director of the Department/School offering the course, if the expectations specified in these Procedures are satisfied.

Where the GA/TA reviews the graded work and their reassessment results in a different grade they must advise the instructor and provide the rationale for their decision.

##### **2.1 Reassessment of Graded Course Component by the Instructor**

###### **2.1.1 Student Responsibility**

2.1.1.1 Students who believe that a grade in a course component, either in whole or part, does not reflect the academic merit of their work, and have reviewed their concerns with the GA/TA if that process is specified in writing by the instructor, should contact their instructor within ten (10) business days of the date when the graded work in question is returned to the class, or when the grade on the work is posted. Grades not questioned within this period may not be reassessed.

2.1.1.2 For work graded during the final week of classes, or during the exam period, there might not be an opportunity to review the work with the instructor prior to the assignment of a final grade in the course. In that case, students should contact the instructor about the work as soon as possible, and

usually within ten (10) business days from the date that grades and standing are available to students on RAMSS.

- 2.1.1.3 Students can discuss their concerns with the instructor either verbally or by email. Students are encouraged to follow up on verbal discussions with emails to record that a discussion took place at a specified time and/or to summarize the outcome of the discussion. Failure to properly document such discussions may jeopardize any future appeal.
- 2.1.1.4 Students may be required to submit a written rationale to the instructor, explaining why they believe the work merits a higher grade. The rationale must be based on academic grounds and be supported by evidence and documentation (e.g. from the course outline, course notes, textbooks, assignment grade rubric). Where the GA/TA has reassessed the work, any comments made by them should be explicitly addressed by the student. Requests that are not based on the merit of the work will not be considered.
- 2.1.1.5 Students must recognize that there are graded course components, such as oral presentations or performances, which do not lend themselves to reassessment. However, where a record (e.g. audio or video recording) of the course component is available reassessment may be possible. Where reassessment is not possible students may raise their concerns with the Chair/Director.
- 2.1.1.6 If the instructor denies, or does not respond to the request for a grade reassessment within ten (10) working days, or if the student disagrees with the result, the student may submit a formal request for grade reassessment to the Chair/Director of the Department/School offering the course within ten (10) working days.
- 2.1.1.7 Students who have exhausted all avenues of the grade reassessment process and believe that a procedural error has occurred in which there has been a violation of this policy or its procedures, may submit a formal grade and/or standing appeal under Policy 168: Grade and Standing Appeals. All formal grade and standing appeals must be submitted by the deadlines to appeal or within 10 business days of receiving the grade reassessment decision if the appeal deadline has passed.

## **2.1.2. Instructor Responsibility**

- 2.1.2.1 Instructors must ensure graded work is returned to students in a timely manner.

- 2.1.2.2 Instructors must respond to students' requests for grade reassessment in a timely manner, that may not be longer than ten (10) business days of students' requests, assuming that students have met the ten (10) business day deadline for submitting requests.
- 2.1.2.3 Instructors should inform students that the reassessment of a graded course component may result in a grade that is higher, lower or the same as the original grade.
- 2.1.2.4 If instructors do not grant the request for reassessment, they must provide students with a written rationale for the denial.
- 2.1.2.5 If instructors reassess the course component, they must provide students with a written rationale for their decision, explaining why the grade was maintained, raised or lowered.
- 2.1.2.6 If the grade reassessment results in a change to a final grade, instructors are responsible for submitting the grade revision.

### **2.1.3 Chair/Director Responsibility**

- 2.1.3.1 The Chair/Director must assist in resolving disputes over grade reassessments when students ask for assistance (e.g. in some circumstances arranging a grade reassessment by an independent assessor).
- 2.1.3.2 If the Chair/Director is the instructor for a course in which reassessment is being requested, and the matter cannot be resolved, the Chair/Director must request that the Dean of the Faculty offering the course appoint an appropriate replacement to act as Chair/Director in the process.

## **2.2 Formal Grade Reassessment by an Independent Assessor**

### **2.2.1 Student Responsibility**

- 2.2.1.1 Students may submit a formal written request for a grade reassessment to the Chair/Director of the Department/School offering the course, in any of the following circumstances:
  - 2.2.1.1.1 they do not feel they can discuss the matter with the instructor;
  - 2.2.1.1.2 the instructor has not responded to the student or reassessed the work within ten (10) business days of the student's request;
  - 2.2.1.1.3 they have not been able to resolve the matter with the instructor.

- 2.2.1.2 Students' formal grade reassessment requests must be based on academic grounds and be supported by evidence and documentation.
- 2.2.1.3 Students must recognize that there are graded course components, such as oral presentations or performances, which do not lend themselves to independent reassessment. However, where a record (e.g. audio or video recording) of the course component is available, reassessment may be possible. Where reassessment is not possible, students may raise their concerns with the Chair/Director.
- 2.2.1.4 Students must explain in writing, and provide evidence and documentation, regarding the reason(s) they believe the original grade does not reflect the merit of their work, explicitly address any comments made in previous reassessments, and whether:
  - 2.2.1.4.1 the instructor's revised grade is inappropriate; and/or
  - 2.2.1.4.2 the instructor's refusal to reassess the work is not correct.
- 2.2.1.5 If the course component in question has been returned to students, those requesting a reassessment of that component must submit it with the formal application, and must make and keep a copy of the course component for their records.
- 2.2.1.6 Students must provide the Chair/Director with the course outline and the requirements of the graded course component in question.

## **2.2.2 Instructor Responsibility**

- 2.2.2.1 The instructor must provide the Chair/Director of the Department/School offering the course with the grading scheme utilized in evaluating the work.
- 2.2.2.2 For work not in the student's possession, such as a final exam, the instructor will submit this to the Chair/Director. Instructors must make and keep a copy of this work for their records.
- 2.2.2.3 Instructors must provide the Chair/Director with the student's grade breakdown in the course (e.g. what each component is worth, what the student achieved in each component) if requested.

## **2.2.3 Chair/Director Responsibility**

- 2.2.3.1 Within ten (10) business days after receiving all relevant documents, the Chair/Director must inform the student in writing whether the requested grade reassessment is granted.

- 2.2.3.2 If a request for grade reassessment is not granted, the student must receive written feedback that provides a rationale for denying the request. This decision cannot be appealed further.
- 2.2.3.3 If students raise concerns about a course component that does not lend itself to independent reassessment, the Chair/Director is expected to respond in writing to the concerns.
- 2.2.3.4 If students request a partial reassessment, the Chair/Director will determine if such a partial reassessment is appropriate. For a graded course component in graduate courses, partial reassessment is not permitted.**
  - 2.2.3.4.1 If the Chair/Director decides that more than the requested part of the work will be reassessed, the student must be notified by email prior to the reassessment, with an explanation of why the structure of the work warrants such a decision.
  - 2.2.3.4.2 In this case, the student has five (5) business days to decide whether to withdraw the request for reassessment.
- 2.2.3.5 The Chair/Director must ensure that grade reassessments are done by qualified individuals. The Chair/Director may select a new assessor who is internal or external to the University. Normally, the Chair/Director should not be the assessor. The Chair/Director will take steps to ensure the impartiality of the assessor.
  - 2.2.3.5.1 The Chair/Director will provide the assessor with the grading scheme and clean copy of the work, identical to the originally submitted work, with all grading notations and all student identifiers deleted.
  - 2.2.3.5.2 Normally, neither the instructor nor the student will be informed of the identity of the assessor.
  - 2.2.3.5.3 Neither the Chair/Director nor a selected assessor will consult with the original assessor.
- 2.2.3.6 The Chair/Director will communicate the decision of the new assessor, to the student and the instructor by email, normally within ten (10) business days of informing the student that the grade reassessment request was granted. If more time is needed to assess the work, the Chair/Director will inform the student by email.
- 2.2.3.7 The Chair/Director must communicate the rationale for the decision, explaining why the grade was maintained, raised or lowered.
- 2.2.3.8 The reassessed work will be sent to the student. However, if the work was not in the hands of the student, e.g. final exams, the reassessed work will be sent to the instructor and the

Chair/Director will advise the student accordingly. The student may have supervised access to the reassessed work by contacting the instructor.

- 2.2.3.9 The reassessed grade becomes the official grade for that work. If the final grade is revised, the Instructor is responsible for submitting the grade revision. Normally, the Chair/Director will advise the instructor of the results of the reassessment and request that the instructor amend the student's final grade accordingly. If the instructor declines to do so, or fails to do so within five (5) business days, the Dean or Dean's designate is authorized to submit a grade change form and must inform the instructor that a grade change has been authorized. The regraded mark becomes the final mark for the coursework and is not appealable.

### **3. GRADE RECALCULATION PROCEDURES**

Students who believe that there has been an arithmetical error (e.g. due to an omission, improper addition) in calculating the grade on an individual course component, or their final course grade, should generally first review their concerns with the instructor to resolve the issue. However, the instructor may specify that students review their concerns with the GA/TA prior to requesting a grade recalculation by the instructor. In such cases, instructors must inform students of this process in writing.

Grade recalculation, therefore, may be a multi-stage process commencing with an informal review by the GA/TA, proceeding to a request for grade recalculation to the instructor, and, thereafter, to the Chair/Director of the Department/School offering the course, if the expectations specified in these Procedures are satisfied.

Where GAs/TAs review the calculation of the grade and this results in a different grade they must advise the instructor and provide the rationale for their decision.

#### **3.1 Student Responsibility**

- 3.1.1 Students who believe that there has been an arithmetical error (e.g. due to an omission, improper addition) in calculating the grade on an individual course component and have reviewed their concerns with the GA/TA where this process is specified in writing by the instructor, should contact their instructor as soon as possible and usually within ten (10) business days of the date when the graded work in question is returned to the class, or when the grade on the work is posted, to resolve the issue.
- 3.1.2 For work graded during the final week of classes, or during the exam period, there might not be an opportunity to review the work with the instructor prior to the assignment of a final grade in the course. In that case, the student should contact the instructor about the work as soon as possible, usually within ten (10) business days from the date that grades and standing are available to students on RAMSS.

- 3.1.3 Students can raise their concerns with the instructor either verbally or by email. Students are encouraged to follow up on verbal discussions with emails to record that a discussion took place at a specified time and/or to summarize the outcome of the discussion.
- 3.1.4 Students who request a grade recalculation must submit the relevant, original course work that has been returned to them and indicate precisely where they think the error has occurred. If the instructor has the graded work, the student will be given supervised access to the work to prepare the required explanation for the grade recalculation.
- 3.1.5 Students may submit a written request for a grade recalculation to the Chair/Director of the Department/School offering the course, in any of the following circumstances:
  - 3.1.5.1 they do not feel they can discuss the matter with the instructor;
  - 3.1.5.2 the instructor has not responded to the student within ten (10) business days of the student's request for a grade recalculation;
  - 3.1.5.3 the instructor has not recalculated the work within ten (10) business days of the student's request for a grade recalculation;
  - 3.1.5.4 they have not resolved the matter with the instructor.
- 3.1.6 Students who have exhausted all avenues of the grade reassessment process and believe that a procedural error has occurred in which there has been a violation of this policy or its procedures, may submit a formal final grade and or standing appeal under Policy 168: Grade and Standing Appeals. All formal grade and standing appeals must be submitted by the appeal deadlines or within 10 business days of receiving the grade reassessment decision if the appeal deadline has passed.

## **3.2 Instructor Responsibility**

- 3.2.1 Instructors should inform students that the grade recalculation of a graded course component may result in a grade that is higher, lower or the same as the original grade.
- 3.2.2 A grade recalculation will not result in the work being reread/reassessed. However, if a section of the work was not graded that section will be read and assessed and the grade for that section will be included in the grade total.
- 3.2.3 Instructors must respond, verbally or by email, within ten (10) business days to students' requests for a grade recalculation. Instructors must inform the student in writing whether a grade change has occurred and the reason(s) for their decision.
- 3.2.4 The instructor must provide the Chair/Director with the student's grade breakdown in the course (e.g. what each component is worth, what the student achieved in each component) when requested.

- 3.2.5 If a grade change has occurred, the instructor is responsible for submitting the grade revision.

### **3.3 Chair/Director Responsibility**

- 3.3.1 The Chair/Director of the Department/School offering the course must assist in resolving disputes over grade recalculation when students ask for assistance.
- 3.3.2 If the Chair/Director is the instructor for a course in which recalculation is being requested, and the matter cannot be resolved, the Chair/Director must request that the Dean of the Faculty offering the course appoint an appropriate replacement to act as Chair/Director in the process.
- 3.3.3 The Chair/Director must respond to students' requests for grade recalculation within ten (10) business days after receiving all relevant documents.
- 3.3.4 The Chair/Director must inform the student in writing as to whether there is a change in grade and the reason(s) for the decision.
- 3.3.5 Where there is a change in the grade, the instructor is responsible for submitting the grade revision. Normally, the Chair/Director will advise the instructor of the results of the grade recalculation and request that the instructor amend the student's final grade accordingly. If the instructor declines to do so, or fails to do so within five (5) working days, the Dean or Dean's designate is authorized to submit a grade change form and must inform the instructor that a grade change has been authorized.

### **RELATED POLICIES:**

**Policy 166: Course Management**

**Policy 168: Grade and Standing Appeals**